

# BrightTribeNews



Issue 1

Spring  
2016

**Welcome to the new Bright Tribe Trust newsletter, bringing you news and updates about Bright Tribe and our community of schools across England. We know that you receive regular newsletters from your child's school but we felt it was important that we give parents more information about the wider network of schools and the team working centrally for Bright Tribe.**

**If you have any feedback or there is anything you would specifically like us to include in these newsletters, please get in touch. Contact details are on the last page of the newsletter.**

**We really hope you enjoy reading about our good news and updates.**

## Spotlight on...

our Director and Assistant Director of Schools, Gary Kelly and Mary McKeeman



**Gary Kelly –  
Director of Schools**

Gary is Bright Tribe Trust's Director of Schools. He is a qualified teacher who has successfully led many pioneering academic schemes, such as the Department for Education's 14-19 Greater Manchester Challenge. Previously, he has also worked with the Rochdale Council to improve and reduce the amount of NEETs (young people Not In Employment, Education, or Training).

Gary has significant experience in working with underachieving schools, with a clear focus on rapid improvement. An example of this was seen during his time in Greater Manchester where he turned a High School around within 18 months from being in Special Measures to Good.

Gary continues his role as an experienced lead inspector of schools, and has recently spent time working on various projects including school improvement, specifically supporting leadership and management and the quality of teaching within the primary, secondary and post-16 sector.

Gary says: "I am absolutely delighted to be a part of the Bright Tribe family. All our schools are on an incredible journey and I am excited to be working with staff, students, parents and the local communities to ensure that our schools are providing an outstanding and broad education for all."



**Mary McKeeman –  
Assistance Director  
of Schools**

Mary is a qualified teacher with considerable experience working in a wide range of schools, academies, pupil referral units and special schools. She also has experience of academy conversions and school/academy start-ups.

Mary has led a number of schools facing challenging circumstances and has achieved positive Ofsted inspections as a result of bringing

about rapid and sustainable improvements. She is committed to supporting all children to achieve their full potential.

Mary says: "This is an exciting time for all of our academies within the trust as we look forward to working collaboratively on further raising standards and working towards the goal of being recognised as Outstanding."

## “Once in a lifetime! What an experience!”



Recently a group of students from The Whitehaven Academy were fortunate enough to visit Japan on a study tour. In the words of one student: “Once in a lifetime! What an experience!”.

The study tour involved the students staying with host parents and school buddies for the duration of their stay. A report written by the students on their return says: “A real insight into Japanese culture, food and hospitality. We were not disappointed. Everyone was so generous, helpful, kind, excited and very caring.

Eating was an adventure at times and some of the students were more adventurous than others... from Tempura lotus root to battered whale and everything in between!

The hosts ranged from a Buddhist Monk sharing his temple to a family of four giving up their only bedroom for the students to stay. We have made friends for life!”

‘The Great Britain SASAKAWA Foundation’ and ‘Osaka International House’ put on an extensive and packed study tour. This included staying with host families, school buddies, visiting temples, singing karaoke, visiting the Advanced Telecommunications Research Institute, riding the Bullet Train, visiting Hiroshima, meeting with a survivor of the first atomic bomb, staying on an island, touring Miyajima, visiting a local high school, practicing calligraphy and visiting the Life Safety Learning Centre.

One of the most humbling experiences was a talk from a survivor of the first A bomb in Hiroshima. He was very candid and it affected all the students in some way.

It was very much a two way process. The Japanese were interested in our life styles. The students all have a much deeper appreciation and understanding of each other’s culture, society and achievements.

## Student internships



A student internship programme has begun at The Whitehaven Academy. This is an excellent method of exposing students to the real world of work whilst also enabling them to build confidence and competence within the safe environment of the school. Mr Grant, Principal, interviewed and confirmed 22 new interns, all Post 16 students. They will take up post across the academy for the remainder of the year. The areas they will participate in include SLT, Marketing, School Office, Teaching, and as Learning Support Assistants, Transition Team members and Lab Technicians.

## Microsoft Showcase status



Mr Grant recently attended the ‘Redefining Learning’ conference in partnership with Microsoft in London, where the academy was officially recognised as a Microsoft Showcase School.

The Microsoft Showcase Schools programme ‘highlights innovative leadership and teaching across globally recognised schools. Showcase School leadership teams are part of a professional community that recognises and amplifies the use of technology to drive school-wide transformation and efficiencies.’

The Whitehaven Academy is working closely with Bright Tribe and education technology partner The Knowledge Network to implement and embed world class Technology Supported Learning across the academy, following successful pilots during the last academic year.

Mr Grant commented: “It is an absolute honour and thrill to be the only academy in Cumbria and one of only six in England to have received this accolade. Working closely with the Showcase Schools team at Microsoft will enable students, parents and the academy to really influence the change of education and the use of technology in education. Competent and effective use of technology is pivotal to skills for life in the 21st century and this will give our students a real edge in the employment market place.”



## Positive report following Ofsted visit



Colchester Academy received a very positive monitoring visit from Ofsted recently where it was stated that the academy was taking effective actions to improve. The visit reviewed how the academy was progressing since its official inspection in July 2014.

Since that inspection, and since joining Bright Tribe in April this year, Colchester has made a number of changes to significantly improve the school. Ofsted noted the improvements to the quality of leadership and management saying; "The new Principal has acted swiftly to set out a clear improvement plan that prioritises the right things."

The report goes on to say that "teaching and raising achievement in all areas are the heart of the academy's plans and there are signs of early impact. For example, a fresh approach to promoting reading is in place, starting with an intense programme of reading support for all new Year 7 students.

"The academy has also made progress in the way that it checks on students' progress. Each student in Year 11 is being very closely monitored as they get nearer to their exams next year and the academy plans to roll out this approach to other year groups."

Ofsted also noted the following strengths in approaches to securing improvements:

- Student outcomes for Year 11 were significantly better in several subjects than in previous years, demonstrating capacity to raise the quality of teaching and students' achievement.
- Teaching in some subjects which were previously under performing, especially modern foreign languages, is improving.
- The academy is making better use of Key Stage 2 data when students move from primary school.

Ms Pierson, Principal, said: "The outcome of this visit is extremely positive for Colchester Academy. It is a reflection of the focused efforts we have implemented to improve not only the academy but more importantly the outcomes for our young people. I have a dedicated and determined staff body who have adjusted rapidly to the new high expectations and I commend them all for this. As we progress this year, we will continue to work together in the same direction, to get the result this academy deserves and that is to be rated a good school.

"The academy has experienced monumental change in a short space of time; this result proves that our focus has indeed remained centred on what is our core purpose, and that is to educate the next generation."

## Cyber-bullying workshop with X Factor's Sam Callahan

Colchester Academy was gripped by X Factor magic recently as they invited singer / song writer Sam Callahan into school. Sam performed four songs to the entire school but was also there to deliver an important message about staying safe on line.

Despite the enthusiastic response from students as Sam performed some covers and his own material, they fell silent as they listened to his experience of on line abuse. Sam shared the story of a fan who had experienced extreme and sustained abuse through social media and how she had made contact with him for support. The girls listened intently as he gave tips about protecting themselves on line and using social media responsibly.



## PiXL perfect

Earlier this year Colchester Academy joined the PiXL Club, a not-for-profit educational group that supports schools across the country with access to conferences, resources and revision materials.

the **PiXL** club  
partners in excellence



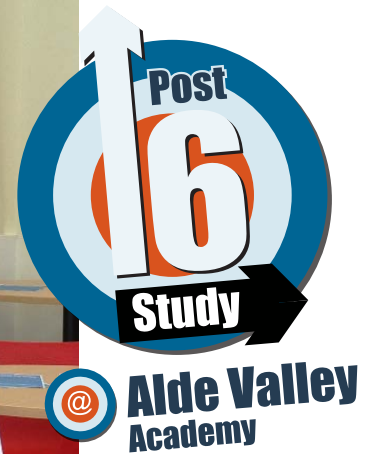


## Post-16 Centre is officially opened

Alde Valley Academy's Post-16 Centre was officially opened recently. Members of the local community as well as staff, students and parents were all invited to see the new facilities and to find out more about the Post-16 Centre and curriculum offer. Guests received a tour of the centre, as well as refreshments prepared by Year 12 and 13 Hospitality students.

Niki Rousseau, Community Liaison Manager at EDF Energy Sizewell B Power Station, and a former student of the academy, officially opened the Post-16 Centre.

Niki said: "It is great to see the new Post-16 Centre open to equip young people with the skills and education that they need for their onward journey into further education or work. The partnership EDF Energy has with the academy has enabled me to 'come back to school' to encourage and enable students to reach their full potential in the world of work."



## Alde Valley students help EDF Energy create new wetland habitat

A group of Post-16 science students were lucky enough to get the opportunity to carry out a real life experiment outside the classroom, thanks to EDF Energy's Sizewell C project. The students spent time at the site for a new wetland habitat creation scheme associated with the Sizewell C project.



## Suffolk Young Poets competition winners!

Congratulations to Sophie Holmes and Russell Stafford who are winners of the Suffolk Young Poets Competition.

Sophie and Russell joined eight other successful young poets and received a certificate and a book token as well as the opportunity to read their winning poems alongside Joanne Limburg. Joanne had her first collection for children, Bookside Down, shortlisted, and highly commended, for the CLPE Poetry Award.

All the prize-winning poems were published in the East Anglian Daily Times and on the Poetry Trust website.





## Harvest Festival

Year 4 worked with the Oldham Foodbank during the Harvest Festival to collect food for families in the local community.

Oldham foodbank was delighted with the donations and thanked all the pupils and their families for their generosity.

This was a great way of teaching the children about helping people less fortunate than themselves and linking the message to Harvest Festival.



## Platinum Healthy Schools Awards

Miss Malley, Assistant Principal, recently helped the school secure the Platinum Healthy School Award. The school has been working on improving the children's knowledge of bullying, what bullying is and how to help and ensure all children feel safe in school. Teachers held a survey with the children to find out how the children felt in school. All the children said they felt safe and that they knew the teachers were there to help them. School also did some work around raising the children's awareness of the negative effects alcohol can have on the body. The school has also been increasing sporting clubs across school to give the children more opportunities to engage in sport and keep themselves fit and healthy.



## Competitive Sports Kit Competition

The School Ambassadors were asked to think of a way of raising money to pay for competitive sports kit for the school.

Wanting to have a sports theme for the fund raising, the children considered a number of ideas such as a sponsored run, walk or decathlon.

Following discussions with other pupils the School Ambassadors decided to hold a sponsored climb. A climbing wall was provided by Manchester Climbing Centre and was situated in the key stage 2 playground.

All key stage 2 children were able to participate and they asked family and friends to sponsor them for each full climb made up the wall. About 200 children that took part over the course of the day.

The money raised enabled the school to purchase branded t-shirts, tracksuit bottoms, shorts, football socks and sweatshirts. The children now have a really smart competitive sports kit and they look fantastic!







## Adventure Week

Pupils enjoyed a fantastic week pushing themselves out of their comfort zone and embracing the outdoor adventure life at the Hilltop Outdoor Centre. Hilltop Outdoor Centre boasts two discrete centres within 26 acres of private woodland, surrounded by 200 acres of public woodland, overlooking the seaside town of Sheringham. Challenge by Choice is the centre's ethos with the emphasis continuing to be on Learning through Activity, Enjoyment, Achievement, Discovery and Reflection. The Cliff Lane 'Hilltoppers' returned to school stronger, more determined and dirtier! Hopefully they returned home full of stories and adventures. The school invited the pupils with their families in to school to share photos and stories.



## Moon Zoom!

CRASH! What's that in the playground? Let's go outside and take a look! Stand back everyone – it looks like a UFO has crash landed. Find out who might have landed by exploring the craft. Would you like to be an astronaut? You'll need a pretty sturdy spacecraft if you do. Start off making a model spaceship, how many windows? How many doors?

The children in Key Stage 1 have been busy learning all about planets in their topic 'Moon Zoom'. This included making 3D models of the planets in the solar system.

This exciting topic is science themed and uses the four Cornerstones principals Engage, Develop, Innovate and Express.

## Wizard of Oz lands at Cliff Lane

The travelling theatre company "Magic of Theatre" came into school and performed "The Wizard of Oz" to Years 1 to 6. It was an amazing performance and all the children and staff thoroughly enjoyed it.





## New structure and vision for Castle Hill Infant and Junior Schools

On 1st December 2014 both the schools converted to academy status and became part of Bright Tribe Trust. Since converting the schools have moved to closer working between the two schools and from January 2016 the leadership team was restructured so that the two schools now share one Principal and senior leadership team. This brings benefits in terms of consistency for pupils and parents and ensures a smooth transition from the infants to the junior school.

Mrs Allpress is now Principal for both schools.



## Kingswood trip

Year 6 pupils went on a residential trip to Kingswood in Norfolk recently. The children enjoyed a vast array of activities such as: zip-wire, caving, quad bikes, go-karting, aeroball, nightline, bouldering, low ropes, indoor climbing plus many more!



## Music workshop

The infant school enjoyed an interactive music workshop recently. It was an opportunity for the children to look at and hear a variety of brass instruments being played. They were also

*visited by an opera singer!*



## In focus...

# A parent's guide to Assertive Mentoring

Throughout each of the Bright Tribe primary academies we have introduced a new system called Assertive Mentoring, but what is it and what does it mean for your child?

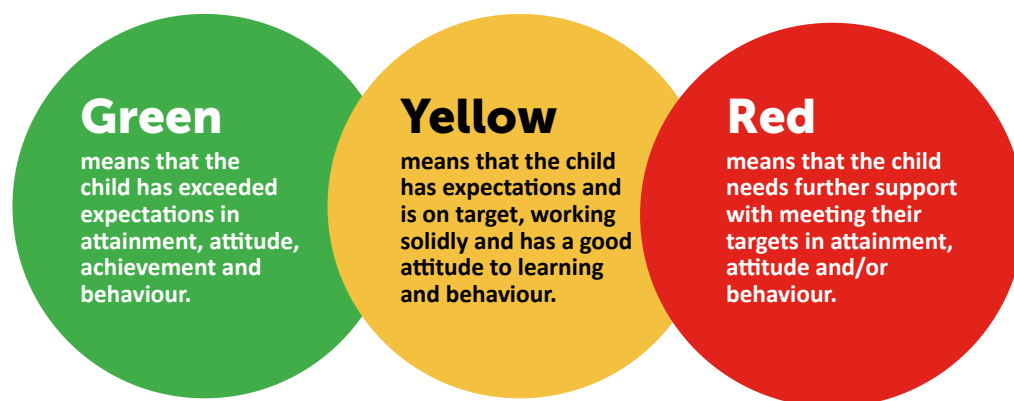
### The aims of Assertive Mentoring are:

- to raise standards for all
- to motivate and involve children in their learning
- to inform and involve parents in their child's learning.

### Academic work

Assertive Mentoring targets what a child can do, and what they need to do to move to the next level. It allows teachers to set achievable targets in reading, writing and mathematics each half term, and to work with the children to complete these. The system facilitates sharing these targets with parents so that you can help your child to achieve even more quickly. Children know exactly what level they are working at, and what they need to do to move on. Marking and feedback to children are very focused and termly mentoring meetings review what has been achieved and what needs to be done next.

### Assertive mentoring is based on a colour coding system



### The advantages of the system:

- Quick and easy to use and understand.
- All staff in school use the same approach.
- Children judge their own learning and behaviour: they are startlingly accurate.
- Children are empowered to take ownership and control of the way they behave and their attitude to learning.
- Children who have a good attitude to learning and school life are praised.

Assertive Mentoring has been introduced to all our primary academies to raise standards for all.

For further information on Assertive Mentoring you can visit the below website:

[www.assertivementoring.com](http://www.assertivementoring.com)





## Final word...

Mary McKeeman

Bright Tribe's Assistant Director of Schools

Bright Tribe Trust is a new type of Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) that is different from other academy chains in its unique approach to education, school improvement and the development of learners.

Bright Tribe's core values – Learn, Grow and Prosper – demonstrate our commitment to creating a culture of learning, co-operation and collaboration. I would like to share a few other elements of our plans that underscore our commitment to exceptional service, and providing your children with a quality and extraordinary education:

- We value everyone's contribution towards student success.
- We acknowledge and celebrate the diversity, dignity, success and worth of all individuals.
- We will strengthen a culture that supports success and innovation.
- We will share and implement best practices and innovative approaches that enhance student achievement.

Success in education is often measured based on our ability to prepare students for the rigours and challenges of the real world. But, at Bright Tribe that definition of success is evolving. With the efforts of our dedicated staff, new technologies and innovative programmes, students won't have to wonder if they're ready for the real world; students will be wondering whether the world is ready for them!

I invite you to join us on the adventure through education and I hope you enjoy learning more about our schools in this regular newsletter.

Your feedback is always welcome. If you have any suggestions for stories or would like any further information on anything that has been mentioned in the newsletter please get in touch.

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